

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In operations in which light forces predominate, airborne, air assault, or other light infantry lead the combined arms attack, and all other arms support the infantry.

FM 100-5, May 1986

The infantry company is organized to fight anywhere in the world and win. The basic fighting doctrine for the US Army is called AirLand Battle. AirLand Battle at the company level equates to maneuver warfare. This requires bold, aggressive leaders who are willing to accept known risks in pursuit of mission accomplishment. Infantry leaders on the modern battlefield must be capable of using their initiative and making rapid decisions to take advantage of unexpected opportunities. Infantry companies must be aggressive, physically fit, disciplined, and well-trained organizations. The inherent strategic mobility of infantry units dictates a need to be prepared for rapid deployment into combat. The potential locations and possible enemy threats that an infantry company may face require infantry companies to maintain a high state of readiness.

Section I. PREPARATION FOR WAR

The infantry rifle company is organized and equipped to close with the enemy to kill him, destroy his equipment, and shatter his will to resist. This close personal fight requires combat-ready units composed of skilled soldiers and resourceful leaders. These units are the result of a tough, thorough, and demanding training program conducted by leaders who understand the effective employment of infantry forces.

1-1. THE SOLDIER

Our infantrymen must be proficient in marksmanship, close combat, and fieldcraft. They should be proficient with other weapons in the unit as well as their own. They should also be familiar with foreign-made weapons they are apt to meet in battle. In the close fight, our infantrymen must be skilled in the employment of all weapons (rifles, bayonets, LAWs/AT4s, grenades, mines, and even their bare hands). They must be totally confident in their ability to fight with these weapons. These infantrymen must be highly skilled in land navigation, camouflage, and tracking and stalking techniques. Each soldier must be capable of moving undetected in close proximity to enemy soldiers for reconnaissance, for infiltration, and for achieving surprise in all operations. Our infantrymen must have the skill and the will—not to just participate in the close fight, but to dominate it.

1-2. THE LEADER

Our infantry leaders must be the most capable soldiers in the unit. Their leadership will determine the unit's success or failure in battle. They must be tactically and technically proficient. They must be proficient at land navigation and have a thorough appreciation for terrain. For a foot soldier, the terrain is both protector and ally. When properly

exploited it will increase the combat potential of the unit and support the achievement of surprise. The infantry leader must be a resourceful, tenacious, and decisive warrior. The leaders in the rifle company are the combined arms integrators that are closest to the fight; they must be highly skilled in the employment of all the weapons and assets in the combined arms team. The infantry leader must be innovative and flexible in the employment of his unit. He must have the mental agility to quickly grasp the situation and the initiative to take independent action based on the situation and the commander's intent. Above all else, he must possess the leadership skills and attributes essential to his unit's survival and success in close combat.

1-3. THE UNIT

The strength of our infantry units comes from the skill, courage, and discipline of the individual soldiers. The individual capabilities of these men are enhanced by the teamwork and cohesion in the squads and platoons. This cohesion is essential to the survival and success of our infantry units in close combat. It provides the infantryman's will and determination to persevere, to accept the hardships, and to refuse to accept defeat. In the close fight when the decision hangs in the balance, these are the factors that will decide the victor. It is at the squad- and platoon-level that cohesion and teamwork provide the greatest benefits to the combat effectiveness of the unit. This horizontal bonding within squads is crucial, but there must also be a vertical bonding within the infantry force. Vertical bonding occurs when the soldiers have complete trust and confidence in their leaders. Leaders earn their soldiers trust and confidence by sharing the hardships and by displaying the leadership attributes described in FM 22-100. Leaders must have the same confidence in their soldiers.

1-4. THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The unit training program must instill these individual and collective attributes. This training must focus on developing tough combat-ready units. It must consist of difficult, challenging training events that prepare the soldiers, leaders, and units for the close fight. It must be conducted IAW SOPs, FM 25-100, and ARTEP 7-10-MTP. It should emphasize physical fitness and marksmanship skills. The soldiers must be challenged to achieve expert proficiency in all of the combat critical skills. Night training, especially night live-fire exercises, should be routine. The environment of the close fight should be simulated whenever possible. Training events that require subordinate leaders to use their initiative and take independent action are essential to prepare for the decentralized operations that the unit normally conducts. The training must be harsh, realistic, physically demanding, and mentally stressful to prepare the soldiers for combat. This will also develop cohesive, tenacious squads and platoons that will overcome all obstacles to ensure the safety of their unit and the accomplishment of the mission. This training program must continue even after the unit begins conducting combat operations. To maintain the combat effectiveness of the unit, the skills, teamwork, and cohesion must be sustained as replacements arrive in the unit.

Section II. AIRLAND BATTLE

The company commander must understand the concepts and fundamentals of AirLand Battle to effectively lead his company in battle. First and foremost among these is the concept of combat power.

1-5. COMBAT POWER

AirLand Battle doctrine defines combat power as the ability of a unit to fight. To fight outnumbered and win, AirLand Battle requires commanders to rapidly concentrate their combat power at decisive points on the battlefield. A commander must understand—

- How to apply the combat potential of his unit.
- How to generate maximum combat power.
- How the enemy will attempt to degrade his unit's combat power.
- How the terrain and other environmental factors affect the combat potential of his unit and the enemy.
- How to sustain the combat power of his unit.

Combat potential is the ability of a unit to fight before enemy contact. Combat power is the actual amount of combat potential that is brought to bear on the enemy. Both are dynamic concepts; they are constantly changing based on the situation. They are also affected by enemy actions to degrade the unit's ability to generate combat power. Commanders must seek conditions where their relative mobility, firepower, and protection exceeds those of the enemy. For example, the infantry company fights in restrictive terrain where the enemy is reduced to foot movement or, they fight in close with the enemy to limit his ability to employ his heavier weapons effectively. A primary means of gaining protection for dismounted infantry is conducting operations at night. Combat power is not determined just by the number of weapons or systems that a unit has; the unit's ability to fight is determined by maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership. It is measured by the effect on the enemy force resulting from these four factors during combat. Superior combat power is generated through a commander's skillful combination of these factors.

a. **Maneuver.** Maneuver is defined as movement, supported by fires, to a position of advantage from which to destroy or threaten destruction of the enemy. An infantry rifle company is designed to move by foot. The company uses stealth, camouflage, and dispersion to close with the enemy. It uses the terrain and all available fires (organic and supporting) to support its movement. These fires may not always be needed, but the company always plans them. Maneuver is the primary means of gaining or retaining the initiative. It may also preserve the company's freedom of action and reduce the unit's vulnerability to enemy fires. Infantry companies take advantage of their ability to move across difficult terrain in any weather to surprise the enemy. Infantry commanders understand their mobility capabilities and avoid fighting heavy forces on terrain that allows the heavy force a distinct mobility advantage. The commander's concept orients on reaching the decisive point using the indirect approach. This requires avoiding the enemy's strength, moving through gaps or weaknesses or around his flanks, and striking him at critical locations to rapidly destroy his will and ability to fight. The CO must also have a thorough understanding of time-space relationships and the impact that their soldiers' loads have on mobility, and plan accordingly.

b. **Firepower.** Infantry rifle companies, properly employed, have significant organic firepower. They also have supporting fires (direct and indirect) available. The elements of maneuver and firepower are complementary. Maneuver allows weapon systems to reach a position of advantage where their fires will be most effective. It is the effect of our fires on the enemy that matters. A few weapons firing accurately from a location that surprises and shocks the enemy has a greater effect than many weapons with a large volume of less accurate fire. Firepower supports maneuver by suppressing the enemy's weapon systems. Infantry companies destroy enemy forces and their will to fight with accurate fires directed at critical targets. Leaders must understand the techniques of controlling and integrating all available fires. They must understand the capabilities of their weapons and supporting weapons. They must be experts at positioning and employing these systems.

c. **Protection.** Protection is the conservation of the fighting potential of the force. It includes all actions that degrade the enemy's ability to maneuver against or place fires on the friendly unit. These include security measures and the use of limited visibility, cover and concealment, air defense, camouflage, and dispersion. Protection also includes maintaining the soldiers' health and morale. Maneuver provides protection for the company by preventing the enemy from fixing the unit and concentrating firepower against it. Firepower can also provide protection, such as suppressive fires during an assault. Infantry companies gain protection by avoiding detection during movement and digging fighting positions when stationary.

d. **Leadership.** This is the most essential element of combat power. The commander and subordinate leaders in the company determine how to employ their units. The combat power generated by their units is dependent upon the concepts and plans they develop. Leaders in an infantry company are expected to lead by personal example and to provide direction for their soldiers. They must be at the point of decision to maintain control, understand the situation, and issue orders if required. They must be capable of motivating their men to accomplish dangerous tasks under difficult circumstances. They must be proficient soldiers themselves, able to act decisively and confidently under any conditions.

1-6. TENETS OF AIRLAND BATTLE

The tenets of AirLand Battle are the essential principles for success in battle. They apply at company level and in every operation.

a. **Initiative.** Initiative means setting or changing the terms of battle by action. Infantry companies maintain their freedom of action while attempting to limit the enemy's freedom of action. Commanders preserve the initiative by preventing the enemy from reducing their unit's freedom of action. When the enemy force has the initiative, the company commander must reduce this advantage by protecting his company and forcing the enemy to react to his actions. This requires an offensive spirit in all operations. Decentralized operations, in which the squads and platoons aggressively fight through enemy resistance with the immediately available resources, support the seizure/maintenance of the initiative. On an individual basis, initiative requires the willingness and ability of subordinates to act independently within the framework of their commanders' concept. This willingness is generated from an environment of mutual trust and confidence between commanders and their soldiers. To provide his soldiers the ability to use their initiative, the leader must ensure his men understand the intent of the

commanders two echelons above their level. The commanders do this by using mission-type orders and clear and concise directions, and by ensuring that each of their subordinates understands the concept and how he fits within it.

b. **Agility.** For an infantry unit to seize or retain the initiative, it must be capable of acting/reacting faster than the enemy it is fighting. This begins with the agility of the commander, which includes his ability to rapidly analyze a tactical situation. He determines the most effective use of all available resources to accomplish the mission. This requires the mental agility to rapidly think through many possible COAs and the likely enemy reactions to them, and to determine the most effective and least costly COA. The company must also be an agile unit capable of rapidly executing assigned missions. This often depends on the unit's SOPs, which reduce the need for long detailed orders and allow subordinates to accomplish routine, recurring tasks without instructions.

c. **Depth.** Depth is the extension of operations in time, space, and resources. Planning operations in depth results in maintaining the momentum in an attack and flexibility in the defense. Commanders seek to fight the enemy throughout the depth of his formations by properly positioning his forces or by skillfully maneuvering his unit. This allows the unit to seek out and concentrate against enemy weaknesses. By swiftly concentrating against first one then another enemy weakness, a skilled commander can begin to seize the initiative on a local level. This success may then allow commanders at a higher echelon to exploit this opportunity. Fighting in depth also requires a commander to anticipate likely events or requirements and plan for them.

d. **Synchronization.** Synchronization is the arrangement of battlefield activities in time, space, and purpose to produce maximum combat power at the decisive point. A commander synchronizes his subordinates' actions on the battlefield by assigning clear missions, by having them understand the timings required in the operation, and by focusing all actions toward achieving overwhelming combat power at a decisive point. Synchronization begins in the mind of the commander as he conducts his estimate. The CO concentrates on the synchronization of his company's fires and movement. He also ensures that his concept maintains the synchronization required by his battalion commander's concept. Issuing mission orders, identifying the main effort, and assigning each platoon clear task(s) and purpose(s), are the best means of maintaining synchronization in a fast paced, fluid environment. These tools allow subordinate leaders to focus on the critical actions of the main effort at the decisive point. Synchronization is also achieved through a detailed time schedule and control measures; however, this synchronization is more likely to be disrupted by enemy actions and changes in the situation.

1-7. AIRLAND BATTLE IMPERATIVES

AirLand Battle doctrine is based upon the Principles of War found in Appendix A of FM 100-5. Leaders at every level should know and understand these principles. They have proven sound over the 60 years that they have been a part of our doctrine. The AirLand Battle imperatives were derived from the principles of war. These imperatives prescribe key operating requirements and provide more specific guidance than the principles of war. The 10 imperatives apply in all operations.

a. **Ensure Unity of Effort.** Leaders in the rifle company provide purpose, direction, and motivation to their soldiers. The company's mission and how he supports it must be

clearly understood by every soldier in the unit. Plans are kept simple, and control measures are easy to understand, apply, and communicate. Each subordinate's concept or plan fits within the next higher leader's plan. A main effort is always clearly designated. All actions throughout the unit must ensure the success of the main effort.

b. **Anticipate Events on the Battlefield.** To maintain or gain the initiative, a rifle company commander must anticipate the enemy's action. Failure to do so results in the commander reacting to the enemy's actions throughout the fight. The ability to effectively anticipate enemy actions depends on the commander's knowledge of the enemy's doctrine, tactics, and weapons, and the commander's experience gained from fighting that enemy.

c. **Concentrate Combat Power Against Enemy Weaknesses.** The rifle company commander must have enough knowledge of the enemy to determine his vulnerabilities and weaknesses. The concentration of fires/effective maneuver can also create enemy weaknesses. Once weaknesses are identified or created, the rifle company commander must have a plan to quickly exploit them. At company level, enemy weaknesses may be of short duration and easily corrected by the enemy commander.

d. **Designate, Sustain, and Shift the Main Effort.** The subordinate unit with the most important task in the commander's concept is designated the main effort for the company. The commander concentrates all of his resources to ensure the quick success of this unit. During the fight, the actions of the main effort provide focus, orientation, and synchronization to all other subordinate units. If the main effort does not succeed or a more lucrative enemy weakness develops, the commander must quickly shift the orientation of the main effort or shift the main effort to another subordinate unit.

e. **Press the Fight.** The commander's plan should be aggressive and offensively oriented. Once the fight begins, the rifle company commander must be persistent in the pursuit of accomplishing his mission. When the enemy is off balance, the company must maintain or increase the pressure to prevent the enemy from recovering. The commander is in a position to personally lead and motivate his men in the decisive action. A well-trained, physically tough rifle company led by capable leaders can increase the tempo when the fight hangs in the balance.

f. **Move Fast, Strike Hard, and Finish Rapidly.** Infantry companies must be capable of fast, dispersed movements followed by a rapid concentration of combat power at a decisive location. The violent attack on the enemy should be directed at enemy weaknesses and from an unexpected direction. Once completed, the unit disperses again to avoid the enemy's counterattack.

g. **Use Terrain, Weather, Deception, and OPSEC.** Terrain and weather significantly impact on a rifle company's operations. The commander should be expert at land navigation. He must understand the potential of the terrain to support maneuver, provide protection, and support the employment of all organic weapon systems. The commander who uses the terrain and weather better than his enemy gains a combat multiplier. The commander's personal reconnaissance helps him understand the effects the environment can have on both forces. Deception operations are planned above company level, but the rifle company commander often uses simple deception tasks or actions to confuse or mislead the enemy. Operations security is continuous for an infantry rifle company. The commander denies the enemy useful information on his unit.

h. **Conserve Strength for Decisive Action.** The company commander protects his unit's combat potential. He ensures that in each fight he brings the maximum combat power to bear on the enemy. He identifies risks and reduces them without unnecessarily taking resources away from his main effort. He reduces his soldiers' loads and ensures his company is organized and trained to conduct continuous operations.

i. **Combine Arms and Sister Services to Complement and Reinforce.** A rifle company commander must be a proficient combined arms' warrior. He is the combined arms integrator who is closest to the fight. Therefore, he must be expert in employing not only his organic assets but also the resources and weapons that may support a rifle company. These may include TOWs, tanks, field artillery, engineers, and ADA systems. At times, he may also control attack helicopters and close air support.

j. **Understand the Effects of Battle on Soldiers, Units, and Leaders.** The infantry company commander must ensure that his unit is trained to withstand the rigors of the modern battlefield. He should know his men before entering the fight. Once in battle, he monitors the condition of his men and sustains the unit's effectiveness. Well-trained, physically fit soldiers in cohesive units retain the qualities of tenacity and aggressiveness.

Section III. BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEMS

The seven battlefield operating systems allow the commander to analyze the various functions of his unit in battle. His plan integrates each of these systems to effectively accomplish his mission.

1-8. INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM

The rifle company commander depends on intelligence from higher headquarters to conduct operations. However, the company commander can collect critical information required to complete his plan. This requires an aggressive, continuous reconnaissance effort conducted by small units moving undetected close to enemy forces. His company also assists in the battalion's intelligence collection effort. He does this by assigning his platoons specific reconnaissance or security tasks. Organic equipment, such as PEWS and NVDs, enhance the companies ability to collect information on the enemy. Additional assets, such as the battalion's scout platoon or GSRs, may support the company.

1-9. MANEUVER SYSTEM

The primary maneuver asset of a rifle company commander is the rifle platoon. The three organic platoons provide him the ability to maneuver independently. The maneuver or positioning of these units allows him to bring firepower to bear on the enemy. The commander must know the capabilities of his platoons; he also maneuvers the antiarmor and mortar sections to bring the effects of their fires on the enemy. The commander must develop an appreciation for the movement rates of his subordinate units across all types of terrain. At times, the rifle company will receive additional maneuver assets such as tanks or other infantry platoons. The direct-fire capabilities of these maneuver assets are considered part of the maneuver system.

1-10. FIRE SUPPORT SYSTEM

The primary fire support system for the rifle company is the 60-mm mortar section or the 81-mm mortar platoon. These assets provide the commander an organic, indirect-fire support resource immediately responsive to the company's request for fires. The commander must know the capabilities and limitations of these assets and integrate their fires in every operation. Normally, the company will also have field artillery support available. The company has a FIST habitually attached to his company. The company FSO, in charge of the FIST, assists the commander with the indirect-fire support planning and execution. The FOs with each platoon also plan and coordinate fire support, locate targets, and request and adjust fires to support the platoon leader's concept.

1-11. MOBILITY, COUNTERMOBILITY, AND SURVIVABILITY SYSTEM

Even without augmentation, the infantry company has significant engineering capabilities. Digging fighting positions, constructing obstacles, preparing minefields, and breaching or reducing enemy obstacles are all unit measures the rifle company may be responsible for. At times, the infantry company is supported by engineer units and equipment. Although the commander may rely on the engineer leaders recommendations, he must understand the capabilities of the engineer units and equipment. He prioritizes the work and ensures the engineering effort supports the friendly schemes of maneuver and fire plans. Survivability includes those activities and procedures that protect the company from the effects of NBC weapons.

1-12. AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM

The rifle company commander's primary means of air defense are passive measures that prevent the enemy from detecting and engaging his company. Moving during limited visibility and using all available cover and concealment and effective camouflage are the primary passive measures infantry companies employ. The company can also defend itself from air attack using organic direct-fire systems. The company must be well trained in the techniques for employing small-arms fire against enemy aircraft. The soldiers must also know under what conditions they have the freedom to engage enemy aircraft. The company may have ADA systems (Stingers and Vulcans) in support. The commander must ensure these systems are fully integrated into his plan.

1-13. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT SYSTEM

Infantry rifle companies have an austere supporting CSS structure—some organizations are more austere than others. The sustainment of his company in combat is one of the greatest challenges facing every rifle company commander. He must be innovative in his techniques of resupply and casualty treatment and evacuation. The company executive officer, first sergeant, and supply sergeant are key players in the company's CSS system. The maintenance program within the company must be effective and continuous, and must have leader involvement at every echelon. (A detailed discussion of CSS for the infantry company is found in Chapter 8).

1-14. COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM

The command and control system consists of the activities and procedures employed by the commander to plan, direct, coordinate, and control the company. It includes the personnel and equipment that assist the commander with command and control. The commander employs his unit in accordance with guidance and orders received from battalion. He delegates authority to his subordinates and clearly assigns their responsibilities. The company XO is the 2IC and is employed in that role to assist the company commander. The company commander does not restrict his subordinates freedom of action with unnecessary control measures. He uses mission-type orders and trains his subordinates to operate within the framework of his concept. He clearly states his intent so every member of his unit can effectively use their initiative. A commander must be proficient at analyzing a situation to develop a plan that has the greatest chance of accomplishing his mission with the least cost in lives and equipment.

Section IV. ORGANIZATION

The infantry rifle company organization varies, depending on the parent battalion. Airborne and air assault companies differ only slightly from the light infantry company. The ranger and H-series infantry companies are different from each of the others. Despite the differences in organization, the mission and employment considerations for each are nearly the same. The tactics for fighting each of these companies are also essentially the same.

1-15. MISSION

The mission of the infantry rifle company is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver to destroy or capture him, or to repel his assault by fire, close combat, and counterattack.

1-16. EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The fundamental considerations for employing infantry companies result from the organization, equipment, and capabilities of these units. Other capabilities result from a unit's training program, leadership, morale, personnel strengths, and many other factors. These other capabilities constantly change, depending on the current status and situation. The infantry leader must be aware of them and plan accordingly. The capabilities and special considerations for all infantry companies are as follows:

a. Capabilities.

(1) Conduct offensive and defensive operations in all types of environments, primarily at night. Specific tasks include the following:

- Seize, secure, occupy, and retain terrain.
- Destroy, neutralize, suppress, interdict, disrupt, block, canalize, and fix enemy forces.
- Breach enemy obstacles.
- Feint and demonstrate to deceive the enemy.
- Screen and guard friendly units.
- Reconnoiter, deny, bypass, clear, contain, and isolate. (These tasks may be oriented on both terrain and enemy.)

(2) Conduct small-unit operations.

- (3) Participate in air assault operations.
- (4) Participate in airborne operations (airborne and ranger companies).
- (5) Operate in conjunction with heavy or special operating forces.
- (6) Participate in amphibious operations.
- b. **Special Considerations.**
 - (1) Austere CS and CSS assets.
 - (2) Limited vehicle mobility.
 - (3) Vulnerable to enemy armor, artillery, and air assets.
 - (4) Vulnerable to enemy NBC attacks and limited decontamination capability.

1-17. COMPANY ORGANIZATIONS

A rifle company can be part of a light infantry, air assault, airborne, ranger, or infantry battalion. Each rifle company is organized differently, but all are similar in size, number of platoons, and capabilities.

- a. A light infantry rifle company consists of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, a 60-mm mortar section, and an antiarmor section (Figure 1-1).
- b. An airborne rifle company consists of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, and a 60-mm mortar section (Figure 1-2).
- c. An air assault rifle company consists of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, and a weapons platoon (Figure 1-3).
- d. A ranger company consists of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, and a weapons platoon, which consists of a 60-mm mortar section and an antiarmor section (Figure 1-4).
- e. An infantry rifle company consists of a headquarters section, three rifle platoons, and an 81-mm mortar platoon (Figure 1-5).

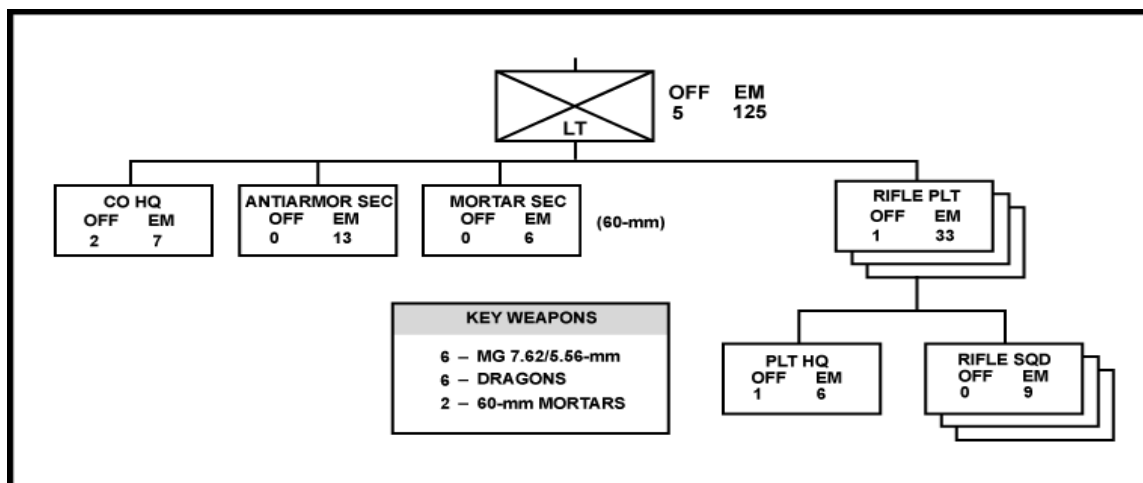


Figure 1-1. Light infantry rifle company.

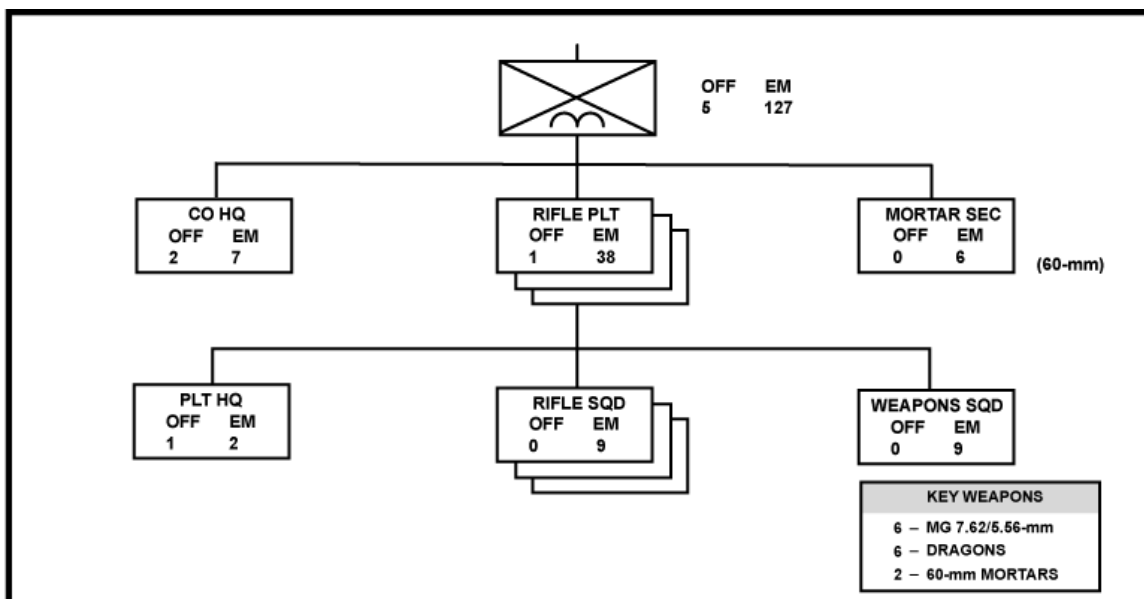


Figure 1-2. Airborne rifle company.

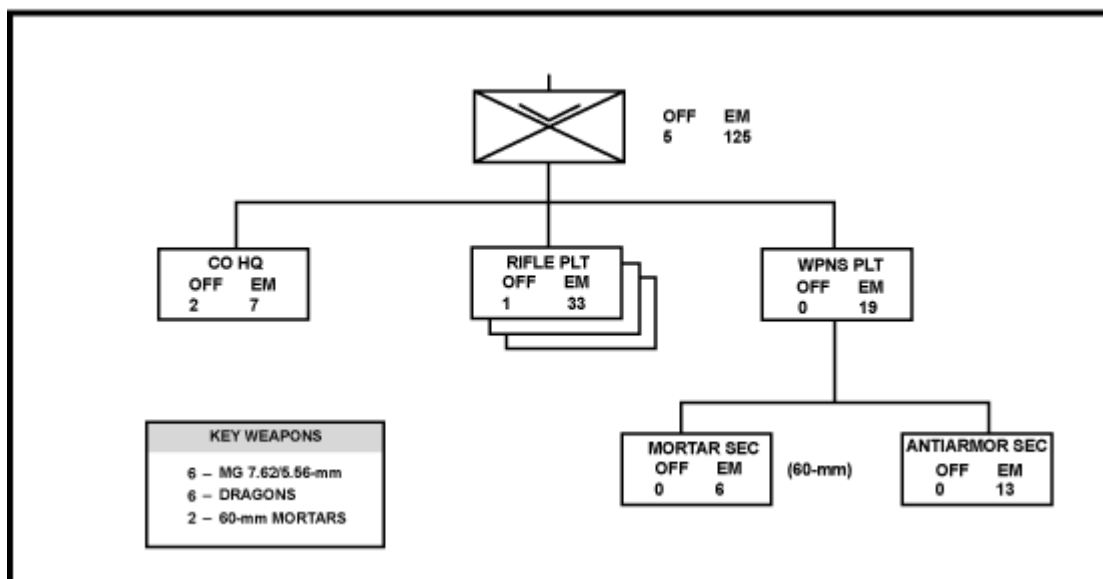


Figure 1-3. Air assault rifle company.

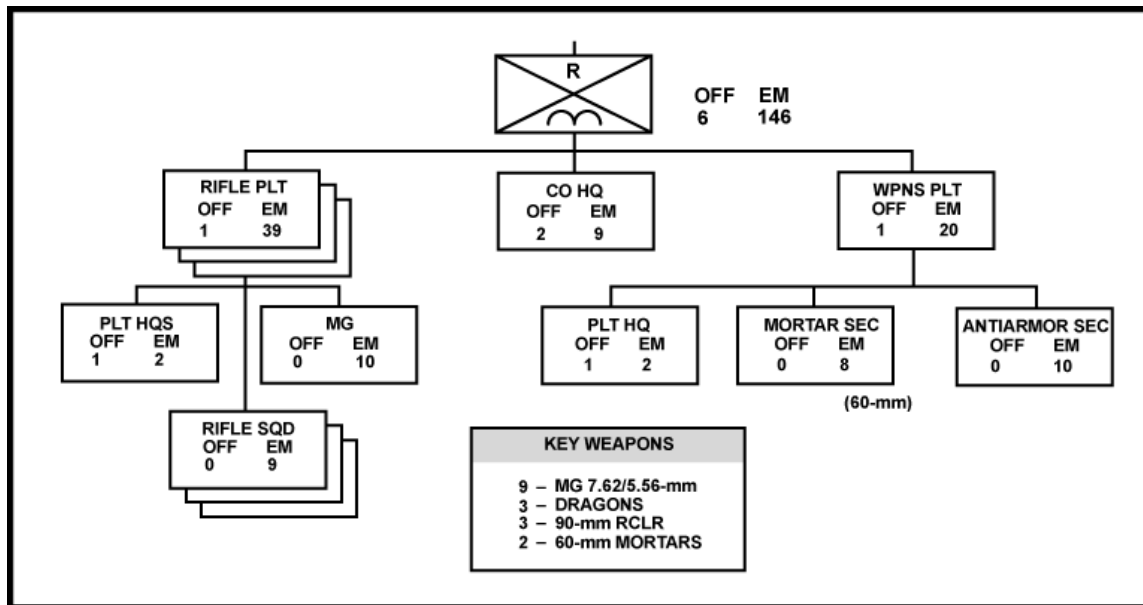


Figure 1-4. Ranger company.

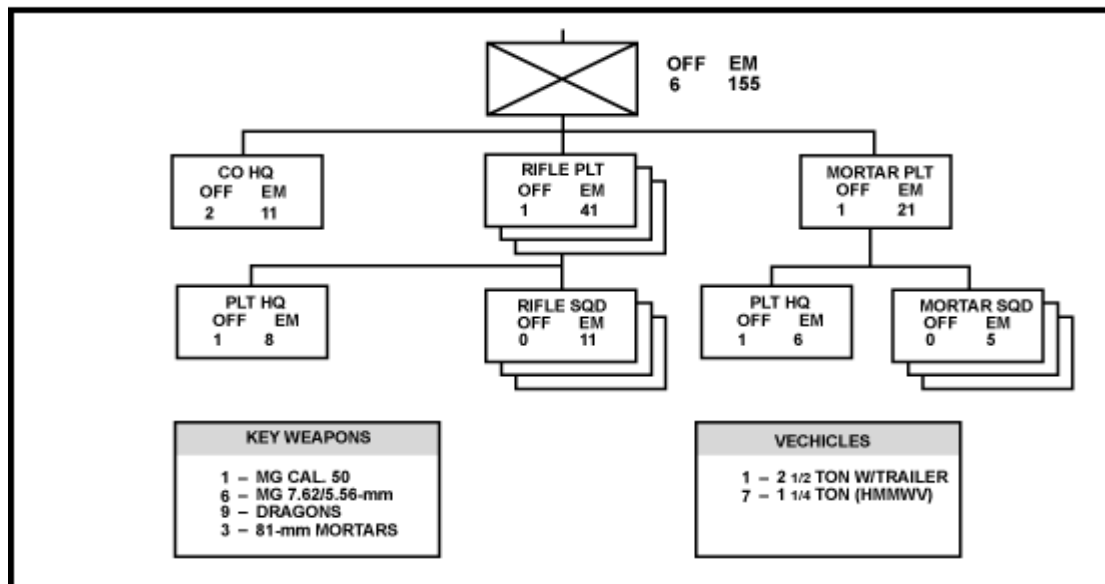


Figure 1-5. Infantry rifle company.